



Mirror

Augustana College, Sioux Falls, SD

KAUR open house marks 10th

By Brenda Wade
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What began as a sound power radio station reaching only the Augustana campus in the 40's has now increased to a 500 watt FCC regulated station with a broadcast coverage of 35 miles.

KOLE, representative of Augie's mascot, Ole, was developed as a sound power station in the late 1940's, according to former Augustana Executive Vice President Tom Kilian.

Kilian was a student at the time and was involved in the initialization and operation of KOLE.

KOLE was housed in the basement of "the cottage" which is now Central Services.

"We thought it was grand," said Kilian. The signal was broadcast over wires between buildings and in the heat tunnels. It could only be heard on campus.

All of the engineering of KOLE was done in the physics department. Turntables and a control board were also built for the station.

KOLE was a member of the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System, which served as a type of network. Kilian said KOLE was one of the first stations of its kind west of the Mississippi river, although similar stations were popular east of the river.

Most of the songs aired on KOLE were popular songs of the 40's. Kilian said that recordings were "scrounged" up from various sources, including castoffs from commercial stations.

Kilian still remembers the first time he and his friends tested the

transmission off campus. Signals were sent out from the top of East Hall while Kilian and his friends listened with a pocket radio off campus.

From then on they knew they had a physically working station, Kilian said.

KOLE's descendant, KAUR-FM 89.1, also airs from the famous test area on the northeast side of campus. Located on fourth floor of Old Main, KAUR extends "the voice of Augustana" in a 35 mile radius.

KAUR's call letters are representative of "Augustana University Radio," said Kilian. When a request to be licensed was sent to the FCC, those call letters were chosen by the regulatory board.

KACR (ACR meaning Augustana College Radio) were already the call letters of another station so they couldn't be used.

KAUR is celebrating its tenth anniversary this weekend. Sunday, Oct. 10 from 8-10 p.m. KAUR will be open for the Augie community to visit.

Brian Bonde, station advisor, and Karl Gehrke, music director, have prepared a retrospective program to be aired during the open house hours.

KAUR has changed considerably from the early days of radio at Augustana. In 1972 it was granted a license from the FCC for permission to broadcast and was considered "an extension of the college into the community."

KAUR started out as a 10 watt station and was used as an educational tool for students interested in radio.

According to Ken Mills, a past student involved in formulating

the proposals for KAUR, the station offered a broader academic curriculum and gave students experience on the air.

Because of this experience several of Augustana alumni have been successful in areas of broadcasting. Mills mentioned former KELO and CB employee, Bryan Bjerke; Program Manager at Omaha KQ98, Barry Taft, and KEL employee, Paul Westby as examples.

Mills himself is the owner of KSQY-FM in Deadwood, S.Dak.

Even in the 10 years KAUR has been in operation, Bond said he has seen changes occur. When he became involved as a student in 1977, KAUR would be on the air only sometimes.

Bonde also said KAUR had no specific direction. Each person did whatever they wanted, and there was not a common identity.

There wasn't any other rock station in Sioux Falls in 1972 either, said Bonde. Because of this, KAUR had an impact.

According to Bonde, the radicalism of the 60's was still alive and radio took on an "underground" tone.

Present day KAUR does follow a unified format, yet it does not lack variety. Depending on the time of day listeners may hear jazz, contemporary music, progressive rock, and Christian rock.

Bonde said the station has become more professional without losing the ability for students to be involved.

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Since its beginning KAUR has been student-run and a student venture, said Kilian. The administration looks at it as such, he said.

Mills also states this as one of KAUR's unique aspects. The "beauty" of KAUR is that it is an opportunity for people to learn by doing and to learn from mistakes, he said.

From Kilian's standpoint, KAUR has grown much from its father station, KOLE. It is a rich, affluent operation, and it will continue to grow.